

Episode 39

Writing of *Takmilah Fathul Mulhim*

Prior to the partition of India, Shaikh ul-Islam Hazrat Allamah Shabbir Ahmad Usmani (may Allah's mercy be upon him) had written a masterpiece commentary of Sahih Muslim in India titled "*Fathul Mulhim*", which received praise not only from within India, but even Arab scholars, and people of knowledge are well-aware of its worth and value. However, this commentary of Hazrat's had only reached *Kitab un-Nikah* when Hazrat's political and communal activities engulfed him and he could not finish it, until he passed away in 1949. Our respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him) had a heartfelt desire for this book to be completed. He was himself busy with such variegated activities that it was difficult for him to take time out for completing it himself. He therefore expressed his desire to several scholars who specialized in the science of Hadith, but they were also very busy.

Finally, some time before his demise, our respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him) implicitly instructed me to begin this work and to have the manuscript reviewed by him on a regular basis. Prior to this, I had not even imagined taking up such a weighty project. However, at my respected father's (may Allah's mercy be upon him) implicit instruction and at receiving reassurance that he would review my entire draft and would make corrections wherever correction was needed, I began working on the *Takmilah* from Sahih Muslim's *Kitab ur-Rada'* relying upon Allah. The intention was that through this process, I would receive training under his supervision. I would therefore write something every day and submit it to my respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him), who would bestow his comments.

However, God had planned something different. I had only written eighty pages of the manuscript when my respected father's (may Allah's mercy be upon him) illness aggravated, and finally the time arrived whose mere thought would keep the heart anxious at all times. My respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him) returned to his Creator on the 11th of Shawwal 1396 AH, circa October 1976. This incident, and the issues arising in its wake, kept the heart numb for a long time. I had started this work of completing *Fathul Mulhim* at my respected father's

(may Allah's mercy be upon him) reassurance that he would supervise it, but now that support had gone. I therefore remained in the thought for a long time:

آں قڊرڅ بشكسٲ وآں ساقى نه مانء

The goblet had broken and the cupbearer was no more

But when the senses began to return after some time, the heart said: "The work that respected father (may Allah's mercy be upon him) had eagerly initiated should be brought to completion to one's best effort. When Allah the Blessed and Most High has granted the *tawfeeq* to start a service, it should be hoped from His grace itself that He would help to bring it to completion as well. Who are we and what is the reality of our knowledge? If He wants, He can take whatever work He wants from a worthless speck of dust. Whatever happens, happens through His *tawfeeq* alone. The work should be resumed by begging for *tawfeeq* from Him. If He wants, He will bring it to completion. And if He does not want, what power do I possess to write even a single word?" This thought gave some courage, and after *istikharah* I restarted this work with the intention of studying the commentaries of the Hadiths and thereafter writing a summary of my study in order to increase my own knowledge.

When Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Fattah Abu Ghuddah (may Allah's mercy be upon him) came to know that I had started this work, he provided further encouragement and at the same time expressed his intention of getting the Introduction to *Fathul Mulhim* published together with his *tahqeeq* and *ta'leeq*. Regarding this, he wrote in a letter to me:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إلى الأخ الأعزّ والحبيب المحبّ، زهرة العلم والعلماء، وعيد أهل التّبل والفضلاء، فضيلة الشيخ محمد تقي العثماني حفظه الله ورعاه ونفع به

من أخيه ومحبه عبد الفتاح أبو غدة

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته، وبعد فأحمد الله إليكم، وأصلي وأسلم على سيدنا محمد عبده ورسوله، وأرجو أن تكونوا أتم وسائر الأهل والإخوة بخير حال وأنعم بال ...

وأمل أن تحدثوني أيضاً عن مشاريعكم العلمية، فقد حدثني بعض محبيكم وهو الأخ محمد إلياس ظفر أنكم تعزمون إتمام (فتح الملهم) لمولانا شبير أحمد العثماني، وهذا فضل جسيم ومغتم عظيم. فأرجو أن يحققه الله علي يديكم، ويقرّ به العيون ويشرح به الصدور والقلوب.

وإذا كنتم تعزمون هذا، فأنا أشارككم بلبينة صغيرة في رفع هذا الصرح الشامخ، والفضل الباذخ، وهو خدمة مقدمة (فتح الملهم) وتحقيقها وطبعها طبعاً ربيعاً وأنيقاً وخليقاً بأن يكون مقدمة لذلك الكتاب العظيم والشرح الجسيم.

وقد توجهت إليها بالقراءة والتنظيم منذ شهر تقريباً، مُراعياً فيما أقرأ منها النشر والطبع في هذه القراءة الأولى، وسأقرأها مرة ثانية للتعليق والتخريج إن شاء الله تعالى، لتكون قرة عين لي ولك، فدعواتكم لي بالتوفيق والعون من الله تعالى.

وفي أول المطبوعة التي كان آثرني بها مولانا البنوري رحمه الله تعالى المطبوعة على حدة، ترجمة لمولانا عاشق إلهي لمولانا شبير أحمد العثماني، أراها قصيرة عن طويل نجاحه، ورفيع عاده، وشامخ أمجاده، فحبذا لو رفعت لي ترجمته بقلم أوفي جمعاً، وأصفي نبغاً، وأحرق طبعاً، وأحسن صنغاً، وأنا لكم من الشاكرين، وتكرموا عليّ بنسخة ثانية للتي عندي احتياطاً عند الطبع إن شاء الله تعالى.

وإذا طبع شيء من الكتب الحديثة أو الفقهية عنكم، فتكرموا بشراء نسخة لي منه، لأشتم رياء الديار ولو بعد المزار، وتكاليفه من شرائه حتى إرساله إليّ كلها عليّ، فتكرموا بذلك دون تردد، ولكم الشكر التام والأجر التام إن شاء الله. وسلامي للأنجال بريرة ومحمد عمران، وباقي إخوانها بارك الله في الجميع وتحياي للعلماء كافة عنكم وللطلبة البررة، وأستودعكم الله، والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.

أخوكم

عبد الفتاح أبو غدة

١٣٩٨/٣/٣ هـ

عنواني الرياض. كلية أصول الدين.

كتبتم لكم هذه الرسالة والأخ محمد إلياس ظفر عندي، فحزك شوقي وشدّ يدي إلي القلم فكتبتم هذه الكلمات، ولكم تحياته.

Translation:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Very honourable brother and beloved, the flower of knowledge and scholars, the delight of people of honour and excellence, honourable Shaykh Muhammad Taqi Usmani (may Allah preserve and protect you and make you a means of benefit)

From your brother and well-wisher, Abdul Fattah Abu Ghuddah

Peace be upon you and Allah's mercy and blessings,

I praise Allah and send salutations and blessings upon Allah's slave and messenger our Master Muhammad. I hope that you, your entire family and brothers are in the best of states.

I also hope that you will inform me about your scholarly plans. One of your well-wishers, i.e. brother Muhammad Ilyas Zafar, informed that you have undertaken the task of completing Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani's *Fathul Mulhim*. This is a work of great virtue and benefit.

When you have undertaken this, I wish to contribute to the construction of this lofty and grand palace through a small brick, by way of presenting my services with regards to the Introduction to *Fathul Mulhim*, its *tahqeeq*, and high-quality printing as befits the stature of this majestic book and magnificent commentary.

To this end, I have been focusing my attention towards studying the Introduction and organizing it for the past one month, and am doing so with consideration to its publication and printing in this first reading itself. And in the second reading, InshaAllah its *ta'leeq* and *takhreej* shall be kept in consideration, so that this Introduction proves to be a coolness of my and your eyes. I request your prayers to receive *tawfeeq* and help from Allah.

The published copy that Maulana Binnori (may Allah's mercy be upon him) had granted me contains a biography of Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani written by Maulana Ashiq Ilahi. I find it somewhat brief for his great stature and personality. How good would it be if you could get his biography compiled for my sake by a pen which is more comprehensive and clearer, and which possesses deep emotions and a better style of presentation. I would be most grateful to you. Also, please bestow another copy of the book at the time of publication besides the one I already possess, as a precaution.

Whenever a new book of Hadith or Fiqh is published on your side, please favour me by purchasing a copy, so that I can at least smell the air of the city, if visiting is not possible. The entire costs from purchasing to shipping are on me. So please do this favour on me without any hesitation. I shall remain ever-grateful to you and InshaAllah there shall be ever-continuing rewards for you.

Please convey my *salam* to your children Bareerah and Muhammad Imran and to their siblings. May Allah grant barakah to all. And my *salam* to all the scholars and pious students. I entrust you to Allah. And peace be upon you and Allah's mercy and blessings.

Your brother

Abdul Fattah Abu Ghuddah

3/3/1398 AH

My address: Riyad, Kuliya Usool ud-Deen

I wrote this letter to you at a time when brother Muhammad Ilyas Zafar was with me. He stirred my emotions and motivated my hand to take up the pen and I wrote these words. He also sends his *salam* to you.

Thereafter he wrote in another letter:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إلى الأخ الأعزّ والحبيب المحبّ العلامة الموهوب مولانا الشيخ محمد تقي العثماني حفظه الله ورعاه وأكرمه وأولاه ونفع به البلاد والعباد.

من محبه وراجي دعواته: عبد الفتاح أبو غدة

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته، وبعد فأحمد الله إليكم وأرجو أن تكونوا أتم وسائر الأسرة الكريمة بخير من الله ونعمة. تلقيت رسالتكم اللطيفة الشريفة، فأحييت من النفوس مواتها، وردت على الروح أقواتها، فله أتم، والله أبوم رحمته الله تعالى وأغدق عليه شأبيب رحمته ورضوانه، وأسكنه فسيح رحمته وجنانه. سررت بكتابكم جداً، وكسبني نشاطاً ونشوةً وحيوية، وأعاد على من العزم والجلد خيراً وإحساناً، فجزاكم الله عما كتبتم فأحييت (ومن أحيى أرضاً ميتة فهي له) كما هو نص الحديث الشريف.

وتلقيت بعد الكتاب هديتكم الكريمة: الازدياد السني على الياغ الحقي، ومقدمة فتح الملهم بشرح صحيح مسلم، فأكرمكم الله وأبقاكم لمحبيكم ملاذاً وموتلاً، ومنهلاً ومعللاً. وسرّني عزمكم على استكمال (فتح الملهم) فذلك الحق الذي أشير إليه بمثل قوله تعالى (وعلى الوارث مثل ذلك)، فالحمد لله الذي آتاكم، وأكرمكم وأولاكم، ونسأله المزيد من فضله وكرمه للشيخ والمريد والطارف مثلي، ومثلكم التليد المجيد.

وقديماً قال أبو العباس المبرّد، وهو القائل الحق: ليس لقدم العهد يفضّل القائل، ولا لحدثاته يُهْتَضَم المصيب، ولكن يُعْطَى كُلُّ ما يَسْتَحِقُّ. وتبعه ابن مالك، وما ابن مالك؟ خير من ذلك، فقال فيما هنالك، في أوّل كتابه (التسهيل) لِيُبَصِّرَ كُلَّ عليل وكليل مقامَ ذوي التأويل والتنزيل: وإذا كانت العلوم مَنحاً إلهية، ومواهب اختصاصية، فغيرُ مستبعد أن يُدْخِرَ لبعض المتأخرين ما عُسِرَ على كثير من المقدمين، نعوذ بالله من حَسَدِ يَشُدُّ باب الإنصاف، ويضدُّ عنه جميل الأوصاف.

فأقرّ الله بكم وبآثاركم ومآثركم العيون، وأفرح القلب المحزون بفقد إبراهيم الجوهر المكنون. وآمل أن يسعدني الله سبحانه بزيارة غير بعيدة أعرج فيها على زيارة الشيخين والترحم على صاحبي المرفدين بمشهد من القلب والعين، فتؤدّي العين حقّها، وتُسكّب الآماق وسُقفا، ويردّ برّد سكب الدموع ظاهر القلب المفجوع. وإنّ لله ما أعطي، ولله ما أخذ، وكلّ شيء عنده بمقدار.

وآمل أن يسعدني الله باستكمال خدمة (مباحث في علوم الحديث) مقدمة فتح الملهم، فأكون كقائد الحمل الشريف إلى الحج المنيف، البركات والرحمات إليه وعليه، وقائده يشدّ بمقوده إليه، لعلّه يناله تما لديه، ويسعد بسعديه، فدعواتكم بالإتمام ولإكمال، والإنجاز ولاحتمال، والله مجيب الداعين.

وبارك الله بالمولود حسان إلي إخوته الأكارم الحسان، وسلامُ جنانة وسلمان، ولبابة وحسناء - من الباقيات - إلى إخوانهن وأخواتهن الصالحات عمران وبريرة ومحمد زبير.

وتحياتي واحتراماتي للأخ الأعز الأكبر مولانا الشيخ محمد رفيع، رفع الله قدره العالي، وأمكنه من تحقيق الأماني الغوالي في المعهد العتيد المتلالي، ليكمل الخلف ما رفعه السلف، وتأتي اللبنة تلك في موضعها، وختاماً أستودعكم الله،

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.

راجي الدعاء عبد الفتاح أبو غدة

الرياض ١٣٩٨/٤/٢٤ هـ

Translation:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Dearest brother and beloved, Allamah Maulana Shaikh Muhammad Taqi Usmani, whom Allah the Most High has bestowed with great bounties and favours. May Allah Most High protect and help you, grant you honour, shower His favours upon you and make you a source of benefit for one and all.

From: One who loves you and hopes for your prayers: Abdul Fattah Abu Ghuddah

Peace be upon you and Allah's mercy and blessings,

I praise Allah before you and hope that all of you and your honourable family are in Allah's graces and bounties. I received your gracious and honourable letter. It breathed life into me and nourished the soul. Bravo to you! And bravo to your respected father! May Allah Most High shower His mercy and pleasure upon him and enter him into His mercy and Paradise.

I was delighted at your book. It rejuvenated me and granted me strength and renewed my motivation in an excellent and gracious manner. May Allah reward you for your writing, for you rehabilitated through it (and whoever rehabilitates a barren land becomes its owner), as has been narrated in a Hadith.

I also received your kind gift: *Al-Izdiyyad as-Sunni 'Ala al-Yaani' al-Jinn* and the Introduction of *Fathul Mulhim bi-Sharh Saheeh Muslim*. May Allah grant you honour, and may He preserve you as the oasis and refuge, the fountainhead of benefit, and a beacon of light for your well-wishers and admirers. The heart was much pleased at learning of your intention to complete *Fathul Mulhim*. This is a right which I refer to by quoting the words of Allah Most High (وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ) "and the heir has a like duty". All thanks to Allah for granting you this blessing, granting you honour, and favouring you, and we ask Allah for more favours and bounties for Shaikh and disciple, and for novices like myself as well as the likes of you who possess familial legacy of honour since time immemorial.

Abul Abbas al-Mubarrid had said long ago, and rightly so: "Excellence cannot be deemed merely because of being earlier in time, and neither can one who does a good work be deprived of appreciation merely because of doing it later. Rather, each is granted what he deserves". And Ibn Malik had also said to the same effect: وما ابن مالك؟ خير من ذلك "And what is Ibn Malik? Better than all your imaginations"¹. Regarding this, he writes at the beginning of his book "Tasheel": Every ill and weak person should look at the stature of scholars of Tafseer. When God-given knowledge is granted together with special favours from Allah, it is not far-fetched for some people from

¹ These are actually words of praise expressed by a wife regarding her husband, which have been narrated in a Hadith. Here, Hazrat Shaikh has alluded to that.

later times to take up something which is very difficult for their predecessors. We seek refuge in Allah from such jealousy as shuts the doors of fairness, and which obstructs praiseworthy traits.

May Allah cool eyes through you, your legacy and the trails you leave behind. And may He grant joy to the heart which is grieved at losing its treasures. I hope Allah the Sublime and Most High will soon bless me with a trip in which I can visit both the Shaikhs and make heartfelt prayers for mercy for both residents of graves with tearful eyes, so that the eyes can fulfill their rights and moist eyes can pour their tears, and the grieved heart can find some solace by shedding tears. Verily to Allah belongs what He grants and what He takes, and everything has an appointed time with Allah.

In like manner, I hope from Allah that He grants me the blessing of completing *Mabahith Fee 'Uloom al-Hadith*, i.e. Introduction to *Fathul Mulhim*, so that I can be like one carrying an honourable passenger for Hajj to the House of Allah, who is destined to receive blessings and mercies, and the carrier briskly carries his passenger in the hope that he can also receive what his passenger shall receive, and he can also be blessed with the good fortune which his passenger attains. I therefore request for your prayers for this work to be completed and accepted in the Court of Allah. Indeed, Allah accepts prayers of those who supplicate to Him.

May Allah grant blessings to newborn Hassaan and his honourable brothers, and *salam* from Jamanah, Salman, Lubabah and Hasna – from among those who remain, to their pious brothers and sisters Imran, Bareerah and Muhammad Zubair.

And my *salam* and greetings to dearest elder brother Maulana Shaikh Muhammad Rafi. May Allah Most High further elevate his high stature, and may He fulfill his precious wishes for the longstanding, noble and radiant institute, so that the later ones can complete the building whose foundations the predecessors had laid, and the special brick can be placed at its place. In the end, I entrust you all to Allah.

And peace be upon you and Allah's mercy and blessings,

Riyad, 24/4/1398 AH

Requesting your prayers --- Abdul Fattah Abu Ghuddah